RAW 11

CONTEMPORARY PICTORIAL LITERATURE

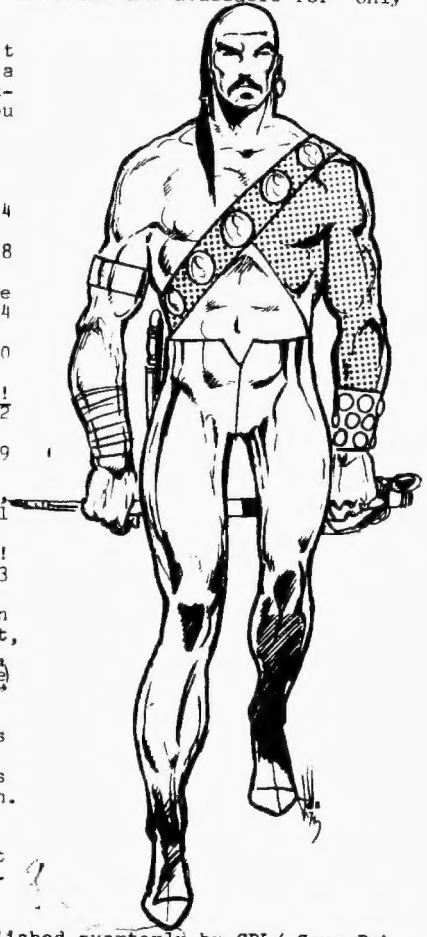
Don Maitz

cpl gang publications

Publisher/ Editor-In Chief: Robert B. Layton, Editor: Roger Stern, New York. Correspondents: Duffy Vohland, Howard Siegel, Roger Slifer and now...Rog-2000 R.C.M.P.: John L. Byrne, and the infamous "Gangsters"...'Doc' Larry Brnicky, Lee Layton, Jack Monninger, Brian Bauer, Phillip "Lester" Wesner, Paty...not forgetting these Honorary "Gangsters"...(Coach) Steven Grant, (Our Man in Hawaii) Dennis Fujitake, (Great Lakes Supervisor) Harry Broertjes and (The Answer Man) Dashin' Don Rosa.

No Subscriptions!!! Single issues: 60¢. Dealers rates available on request. There are absolutely no back issues available with the exception being our DOUBLE ISSUE-Charlton Portfolio! Copies are in stock and available for only $2.00 postpaid.

OUR COVER: As if the shipping industry didn't have enough problems, Mr. Alex Toth sicks a squadron of his own special interstellar menaces on this happy holiday cruise. And you thought the Poseidon had problems!



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ARTISTS THIS ISSUE: Neal Adams, Dan Adkins, Don Maitz, Rich Buckler, John Byrne, Joe Sinnott, Clyde Caldwell, Bob Hall, Pete Iro, Gil Kane, Bob Layton, Jim Starlin, Alex Toth and Bernie Wrightson! Letterer: Roger Slifer.

Special Thanks Dept.: Thanks this issue goes out to, once again, Den Father and Honorary Gangster Joe Sinnott, who makes hard things look easy and always comes through in a pinch. Thanks, Mr. S!

Contributors!: Please send xerox copies, not the originals, of your artwork. We can't return your art, so please keep this in mind.

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WELCOME, MYSTERY BUFFS
Here's a word from the new editor we just DUG UP!!

Well, gee! Thanks, Cain...I think.

Hello, people! I'm your new editor, Roger Stern. I'm also your old co-editor, Sterno...but that's beside the point.

What point, you say? Well, several actually. For one thing it means that Cowboy Bob Layton, who served up the last six issues of CPL has been advanced to the rank of editor emeritus and boy-publisher. Of course, that's not to say that we don't have Layton to kick around any more! Far from it! No, Bashful Bob will still be lurking around our adorable production department with his paste-pot and zip-a-tone. You see, he's got this other little project...ah, but more on that later.

Secondly, it means that CPL is alive and well and still being published in the heart of Hoosierland ...same address, same staff!

Thirdly, it means that people will stop wondering who Sterno is? (Now they can tell their friends: "Oh, yeah! He's the editor of CPL!" That ought to solve my identity crisis!)

Basically, though, it's kind of a reaffirmation of the faith, so to speak. As I write these words now, it is just a little over a year past since CPL #5...our first issue as a fanzine...came out. One year and six issues. Not bad for a quarterly fanzine, eh? We've done what I like to think are some pretty nice things over the past twelve months. We spread a little fun, met a score of fantastically nice people (yes, and a handful of losers), and produced what we felt was a damn good 'zine. And if mail is any indication, we succeeded.

We plan to succeed a little more. CPL will go on. We'll probably adhere a little more closely to the quarterly schedule than we have in times past. But we have a good reason. Come the first of the year, CPL/Gang Publications will launch its second magazine.

"Ya, mean Charlton Bullseye?"

Aww! You guessed!

Yep, 1975 will herald the coming of Bullseye...a fearless fan publication dedicated to, authorized by, and concerned with the creations of the Charlton Comics Group! And if you thought our double-issue Charlton Portfolio was something, "you ain't seen nuthin' yet!"

(Oh, yes! Perhaps we should editorially interject at this point

that CPL #9 and CPL #10 shared an existance in the form of last summer's Charlton Portfolio...said publication totally 48-pages of sheer artistic and literary grandeur by such notables as Messrs. Aparo, Boyette, Byrne, Cockrum, Ditko, Giordano, Maitz, McLaughlin, Newton, Morisi, Staton, and Vohland to name but a few. It was in the larger 8 1/2 x 11 format, contained a previously-unpublished 18-page Blue Beetle story by Steve Ditko, and cost two bucks and fifty cents... postage included! We still have some if you should want.)

You want some particulars on Bullseye? Okay.

Bullseye...like the aforementioned Portfolio...will be in the larger 8 1/2x 11 format. Unlike the Portfolio, it will only cost a dollar. And first issue looks to be something really fantastic!!! For openers, there's "Showdown in Sunuria", the Captain Atom story originally scheduled for Captain Atom #90. Penciled by Steve Ditko some eight years ago, it has recently been scripted by the ever-popular Len Wein and the eternally-youthful Marv Wolfman... and inked by Klaus Janson & Company. And that's just to start! Bullseye #1 will mark the beginning of a series of articles devoted to lives and times of Charlton's ghost hosts. Add to that Nick Cuti's master's thesis on the creation of E-Man, a whole bunch of news on Charlton's line of stars, art by such notables as Milgrom, Sutton, and Byrne, and you've got the fanzine sensation of '75. And just wait until you see our fantastic color cover rendered by the one and only...ah, but that would be telling! Suffice it to say that you won't want to miss Bullseye!!! Be watching your friendly neighborhood adzines for the particulars!

And now...last you forget just what magazine this is...you're in tune with Contemporary Pictorial Literature...on the CPL/Gang Publishing Network!

For those of you who haven't been paying attention at the stands lately. Our-son-the-robot is now a comic book star in his own right! Yes, ROG-2000, who first saw the light of day in these hallowed pages is now the back-up tenant in E-Man thanks to his old man, John Byrne, and the ever-nimble mind of Nicola Cuti. The story of how ROG made the move from CPL to Charlton is to be found elsewhere in this issue. Leave us say that we're pleased as punch that the kid made it big...and if you clowns don't get out there and make E-Man a sell-out..well, so much for you! Hmmph!

Speaking of comic-book sales...we were, weren't we...I think it's about time I hop up on the old soapbox for a bit of tough, hard-bitten editorializing. (After all, can you think of a better place?)

Comic books have always had distribution problems. If you've engaged in the most casual of collecting you've discovered this. Chances are you have to stop at two or more different stores to get the comics you want...unless you live in the vicinity of a collegiate-type book store or comic specialty shop. All the companies have distribution problams. All of 'em. Some, like Charlton or Gold Key, have more than others. But even a line as established as National will have problems getting on the stands at times. The reasons for these marketing difficulties are often complex beyond reason. Some retail outlets don't feel that they make enough money off of comics...and so they let them mildew in a corner. Some wholesalers feel likewise...so likewise that the comics never leave the warehouse. Private inquires into the situation are met with denials, evasions, or borderline profanity.

And still the insanity goes on! There is apparently some sort of "gentleman's agreement" that prevents Gold Keys from appearing on the stands in New York City! Coverless or titleless comics...de facto evidence that the companies have been taken...show up months later in discount stores in bags of six for a quarter. And then, there are the special cases. Like the case in which Green Lantern #87 allegedly had a noticable absense from newsstands in the South. That particular issue, you may recall, introduced John Stewart, the black Green Lantern.

As these words are written, E-Man #6 has yet to appear on the stands in the Indianapolis area. The CPL staff and the various strata of funny book freaks in the Indy area have covered a number of drug stores, newsstands, and supermarkets. No dice. Were it not for subscriptions we wouldn't have seen E-Man at all. And seeing as how ROG-2000 made his debut in that particular issue, we are noticably angered. Calls to the distributor have brought no satisfaction.

So what do ya do?

We're not quite sure. We are

notifying Charlton, that's for sure. We can't help but wonder, however, if there isn't something all of us little people can do. At present we just don't know. Perhaps it would be best if some of us gave thought to infiltrating major distributors. Getting in good with retailers sounds like a step in the right direction as well. In fact it might do a world of good to teach your younger siblings and their friends a little comic book "etiquette"...a sort of grassroots movement towards keeping the racks neat and in order. It surely couldn't hurt.

We're interested in hearing your ideas on this issue. Let us know what you think.

WHAT'S NEW THIS ISSUE:

Some of you might be wondering, "Where's Murphy?" Well, let me assure you that the one and only Mr. Anderson is alive and well...but not in the pages of CPL...this issue! Ya see, we decided that rather than rush the editing of the thing...and rather than spilt the interview in two, which space limitations would have demanded this go-round...the Murphy Anderson interview would be delayed for another issue. Fear not! The mild-mannered Mr. A is revising and updating while you read this...and laying down some lines as well. So when the Anderson tapes do arrive, we know you'll agree that the wait was quite worthwhile! End of explanation.

What do we have this ish? Well, there's the first of a series by a certain Steve named Gerber that just might be of interest. And, another regular series under the heading of Northern Lights makes its debut under the more than capable guidance of John L. Byrne(yes, folks, he can write as well as he can draw!). Plus there's the return of Paty, the unsinkable C.C. Beck, the inevitable Sterno's Hot Ones, and the first "Chronological"ROG-2000 story. Add to that a whole passel of art by Byrne, Toth, Starlin, Sinnott, Buckler, Hall, Caldwell, and Kane....ah, come on! Do we have to say more?

And next issue....opps! Running out of room here! And before I yield the floor,this unworthy editor must pass out some most deserved thanks to his staff...without whom CPL would never get printed. So here's a special tip of the Sterno hat to Jack Monninger, boy talent scout and procurer, for helping in the assembly of this issue's cast of thousands! Also, here's a slightly awe-struck salute to a man whose work always knocks me out...Mr. Alex Toth. And finally, an extra big thanks to two fantastic talents this humble scribe had the happy fortune to encounter over the past summer... Joe Sinnott and John Byrne. Joe has got to be one of the nicest, most gracious beings I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. And John... what can I say? John Byrne is who I would become if "SHAZAM" really worked.

And say, while we're at it...the CPL staff would like to extend a big thanks to you readers! Your letters, your encouragements...not to mention your money...has helped us put CPL on the Market. We appreciate it. Our only regret is that the price of CPL can't remain the same.

Enough of this happy hoo-hah! Fanzines are to enjoy! Do so...and we'll see you in three months! We know you'll be waiting with baited breath!

STARLIN
&PRO

FURTHER MUCK MEDITATIONS by Steve Gerber

9/3/74
8:55 A.M.

Congratulations. You've caught me in a rare mood.

No, I take that back. Not "rare," exactly, as this mood strikes me all too often. You've caught me in a choice mood. I feel like bitching. About almost anything. And since Duffy told me I can just ramble on about whatever I choose to ramble on about whatever, that's exactly what I'm going to do.

Let's start with conglomerates, shall we? And the effect they have on comic books?

Imagine you've created the most popular superhero in the world. We will call him Dog-Man. He runs with the speed of a greyhound, has a supersensitive sense of smell, and he pisses on fire hydrants. That's his big hangup. Okay. You've got this hero. You created him. You've written Dog-Man stories for ten years, and everybody (including you) knows you're successful.

Then, suddenly, the Dog-Man Periodicals Group is bought up by a conglomerate. We'll call it Wretch Industries International. W.I.I. No, no periods. Just WII.

WII appoints a cost systems analyst to study Dog-Man. But he does not really study Dog-Man. He doesn't even know that Dog-Man's secret identity is Herbie Hound. He looks over the books--not the comic books, THE books,the ledgers the only books that really count in this world, the counting books, the dollar-eating-money-grubbin-bite-the-bone-kill-the competition-books. And he decides you're right. You have a success. But he's heard you say some strange things. He overheard you telling your mother that you're thinking of killing off Dog-Man's pet dog. Or getting rid of his fire-hydrant compulsion. To revitalize the strip, or some silly thing like that.

As every money-eating-dog-licking good-american knows, you don't mess with success. Even if you made the success.

So, our cost systems analyst decides to step in.

Why not? He works for the people that own your success, right? Sure!

Unfortunately, he's decided you're not capable of handling your own success,and he's got the dog-dollars to prove it. YOU CAN'T CHANGE DOG-MAN! he says. In fact, what you've gotta do is immediately print ninety-two more books every month about him before the formula runs dry!!

SON OF DOG-MAN! PRETTY PUPPI, DOG-MAN'S GIRL-FRIEND! DOG-MAN'S PAL, LHASA APSO! DOG-MAN TEAM UP!

Grindo! Grind out the dogs Dog-Man must be ground rip shred the shred the dog hamberger dogburger cook the dog dog dog DOG-MAN must be eaten sweeten heaten, you cretin!!!!

(continued on following page...)

Rick Buckler

Before you know it, and you don't care to know it 'cos you've got your dog-dollars too and that's all that matters mad hatters ratters the dog is dead but nobody notices. It looks like the old dog,it still pisses every month, but it doesn't lick quite right, it sheds in winter.

You can't teach an old dog new tricks so why try.

The kids'll never know the difference anyway.

And a cost systems analyst stands on the body of the dead dog pounding his Florsheim artificial heel into its ribs squeezing out the last good

blood best blood dead blood, letting it drip and run into the sewer and he says, look I saved your dog! What are you barking about? See how creative I am? See how good THE books look?

Let's talk about barking conglomerates killing dogs pounding pounding heel of synthetic rubber into mouth crushing teeth crushing gums bleeding gums give dog a root canal team up root canal with imaginary sons 'cos the kids don't know don't care don't only we know what's write we're the creative conglomerate step pound heel.

That's enough about conglomerates. I'll write more later. I'm planning to do this "article" over several days, several moods.

I want to be happy.

* * * * *

9/3/74
10:04 P.M.

When Duffy first approached me about doing an article for CPL (Or did I approach Duffy? Nah, my ego won't let me admit that!), two or three subjects came to mind immediately. One was conglomerates, but when I tried writing about that logically,I discovered the topic defied all logic. The gut-level, nonsensical approach was the only one that ...uh, seemed logical to pursue. You've just read the unedited, unexpurgated, unfunny result.

My second choice of topics proved equally ludicrous: the debate over relevance -versus- entertainment in comics. It took three false starts at a clear, concise examination of the issue before I realized..neither position can be argued. Neither one makes any sense. It's a non-debate, because the entire issue is a false one.

Those who argue for relevance in comics tend to lose sight of the fact that a story must be entertaining in order to get someone to read it. Those who argue for pure entertainment seem oblivious to the fact that there's no point in writing a story which has...no point.

But, wait. A further clarification is needed. Several of them, in fact.

Most of us, I'd guess, probably understand what "entertainment" is. Or at least we know when we're being entertained. But a working definition of "relevant" is a little bit harder to come by.

Most people seem to consider a "relevant" story one that pertains to conterporary social issues: pollution, corruption in government, racism, poverty, the energy crisis, repression of dissent, dissolution of moral standards, stuff like that. Somehow, the definition of relevance that the New Left applied to college courses slid over into the comics. Mistakenly, in my opinion. I prefer to think of these stories as..."topical". They may or may not be "relevant".

* * * * *

9/11/74
8:30 A.M.

The relevant story is one that speaks to you about something you're concerned with, whatever that something may be. That's why I'm always amused when I hear a writer or editor or fan-writer declare that the "relevance trend of the 1960's is dead." The statement is a truism.

1000
LB.S
Rich
Buckler

Of course, its dead! Its 1974. The stories of the sixties, even the style in which they were written, are no longer relevant. Five years have gone by!

A relevant story today must address itself to 1974. To people in 1974. To events in 1974. To the state of the world in 1974. Pollution and racism are not dead issues, but the attitudes toward these problems have changed. Stories have to reflect that.

But I'm digressing. The point I'm trying for is...I don't really understand why anybody would want to read a story that isn't relevant, a story that gives him nothing. More, I find it nigh onto impossible to conceive of a writer who believes his stories shouldn't mean anything. Why would anyone want to write a story that has no point? What's the point (aside from filling twenty or so pages and raking in the quarters) of writing a story that doesn't have a point? My god, how can a writer justify his existence as a human being if his creativity is spent on producing well-crafted, but meaningless, garbage?

Yes, comics are throwaway literature. Their newsstand life is approximately fourteen days. After that, they become waste paper. True. All true. I can't and won't argue any of that.

But each reader spends about fifteen minutes reading a comic book. A comic book needs at least 100,000 readers to survive. Simple multiplication then tells us that those readers in aggregate spend 1,500,000 minutes ... or 250,000 hours...or 10,000 days...or more than twenty years reading one issue of one comic book!!

That much time deserves to be rewarded in some way or another, hopefully with some kind of substance in the words and pictures that justifies the expenditure of so many precious moments.

A story should leave the reader with something more than he had before reading it. An idea. An emotion. Or maybe just a smile.

DAREDEVIL was my idea book. MAN-THING is a combination idea/emotion book. MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE is my smile book. I haven't yet figured out what SON OF SATAN and DEFENDERS are or will become. Too, all of the books are constantly evolving, changing. My attitudes toward them differ from issue to issue. The stories reflect that, inevitably.

The only kinds of books I dislike are the ones which consist of mindless action and nothing else. Books which disturb me are the ones which deal only with superficial, comic-booky emotions, attempting to pass them off as real. I can allow almost any contrivance of plotting, I've found, if the characters stay real. ("Allow" as a reader, not a writer. I may commit contrivances,but I kick myself every time I do.)

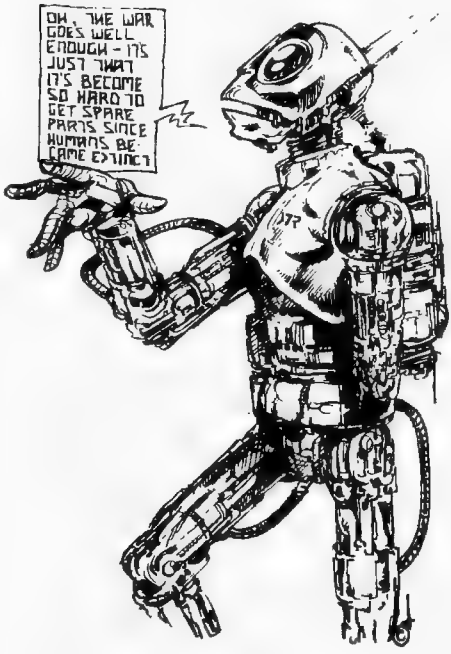
And these, folks, are all the thoughts I can muster for one "article". Yeah, I've got lots more I could say, but at the moment, the spirit's not willing, and god knows, the flesh is weak. Brain flesh. Neato neurons. They're sleepy.

If the CPL Gang decides they want another of these things from me,they can have it. I'd still like to talk about stuff like censorship, fandom, the problems of meeting women on the Upper West Side of New York...and who knows what else. Maybe.

* * * * *

Profound final sentence: Don't hang me up, expoxy, I'm not your gooz!

(Well! If you think the powers that be at CPL...namely us...are gonna be crazy enough to naysay any further articles from a true-blue maniac like brother Steve, you obviously haven't called all your vegetables! Look for more from Mr. G...just as soon as we can drag him away from the swamp. --the Managerent.)



NORTHERN LIGHTS

"Bad Guys We Have Known and Loved" Part I by the Ever-Verbose John Byrne

Galactus!

Were I to make a list of my ten favorite villians, Galactus would be three of them (with Darkseid and Doctor Doom an additional six, and the number ten slot belonging to the Joker). But what's so special about this particular character? In those long-past, much-missed, Lee-Kirby days Marvel, and the Fantastic Four especially, produced a pantheon of Bad Guys that beggars the imagination.

So, why Galactus?

Ignoring his sundry appearances outside the Fantastic four-Silver Surfer opus(es), let us hie ourselves back a period in time about eight years to the 48th issue of the F-4. A Skrull ship is seen to be patrolling the fifth quadrant of the Andromeda Galaxy, described in characteristic understatement as "an unimaginable distance from the planet Earth". (I suspect Stan was perpetuating the common misconception that Andromeda, properly M31 Andromeda, is a star system within our own galaxy, the Milky Way, rather than a seperate,sister galaxy over two million light years from Sol.) Here the Skrulls briefly pass across the path of a mysterious figure briefly identified as "The Silver Surfer."

(Allow me to digress a moment. Never has the evolution of a character been so easily traceable as in the case of the Surfer. Beginning as a nigh android figure, possessed apparently of little or no emotions, probably an artificial being created by Galactus, he expresses confused amusement at human need to consure solid food, and is moved by Alicia's beauty. His own magazine, and with it Norrin Radd, Zen-La, and Shalla-Bal, at this point lies two-and-a-half years in the future.)

The Surfer, we learn, is the herald of Galactus -- at this point no more than a name -- and it is now that our first inkling of importance of this adventure comes. For the Earth is suddenly beset by peculiar atmospheric phenoma -- flame, rocky debris -- which, we learn, have been engineered by the Watcher. Breaking his vow of non-interference (reminiscent of Star Trek's Prime Directive), the Watcher is attempting to hide his pet-planet from the Surfer. He fails, and before the Thing's clumsy attempt at prevention, the signal is sent.

Now, finally, enter Galactus! On the last page we see him at last, a Kirby-giant in Romanesque regalia, but sporting a helmet such as never graced a Caeser's brow. "He is what he wishes to be," says the Watcher, neatly circumventing complaints about the newcomer's issue-to-issue (sometimes panel-to-panel) changes in size. "He is...Galactus!"

Now, no denigration to Stan Lee, but this appears to me to be pure Kirby. Like his direct-line descendant, Darkseid, Galactus is law unto himself. No matter what he does, good, evil, or indifferent, he has a built-in excuse: he is Galactus. He says so himself: "I am supreme unto myself...I am Galactus!"

At times it smacks of the Old Testament. Recall when Moses asks God his name. Rather than "Jehovah" or "YHVH", He replies,"I am that I am."

But Galactus makes no claim to godhood. Again, he is Galactus. He needs to be no more.

Let's have a look at him physically. Humanoid, certainly. Like the Watcher,a giant, though varying from about twenty feet, judged against the Thing in issue #49, to double that by issue #50. He was closer to sixty feet by the time of a more recent appearance. (This, because of his humanoid structure, assuming bones proportionate to ours, would be his maximum height.) However, on the occasion of his next appearance, interrupted by the return of the Psycho-Man, and presumming we can trust Kirby's perspective,in the one panel which affords a comparison, he seems no more than man-sized. In the first issue of the Surfer's own mag, chronologically an earlier appearance, Galactus is back to thirty feet. We could, then, reasonably assume this is his usual height.

Character-wise, then. Here he is an enigma at best. On the one hand he seems callous and cold, not at all concerned with wiping out intelligent, or potentially intelligent races in order to sustain himself.

"GALACTUS IS NOT EVIL! HE IS ABOVE GOOD OR EVIL! HE DOES WHAT HE MUST... FOR HE IS GALACTUS!"
~the Watcher
'74

But then, when was the last time you lost a night's sleep over a crushed ant's nest? So, as the Watcher says, he is not evil. He is just so far removed from us on the evolutionary scale that he has as much difficulty comprehending us as anything worth bothering with, as we have understanding his motives. But really this is just another manifestation of the gulf between us, for while his actions and motives still classify Galactus as a villian within the narrow precepts of our standards,he is able to adjust his thinking to the point at which he pledges to leave Earth involate.

This, of course, would effectively cancel his reappearance, so two rather contrived sequels follow,each of which concern themselves with Galactus trying to "re-enlist" the Surfer. They do serve, however, to give further insight to the character of Galactus himself. In one of Stan's beloved subtle referrences to "higher-ups", we are told Galactus may be forced to break his oath, as the "beckoning spectre of starvation" may drive him to it. For it has been "ordained" that Galactus must never perish!

Clearly, on both of his "return engagements",this fact disturbs him. The third appearance of Galactus in the Fantastic Four, the "Air-Walker" farce, is by far the least inspired of the trilogy. It does present us with a beautiful, if tiny, Buscema-Sinnott panel in which, in close-up, Galactus seems near tears as he contemplates the death of Earth.

In fact, the only overtly cruel act Galactus performs is the removal from the Surfer of his space-time powers, stranding him on Earth, the equivalent of dropping a 20th century New Yorker into a neolithic village. But again, Galactus is not without motive, nor is he completely unprovoked. The Surfer has violently defied his master, and a dog which bites the hand that feeds him cannot expect to be offered more food.

Next Issue:

DARKSEID!

DEATHLOK
THE DEMOLISHER!
U.S. ARMY
Rich Buckler

"The Fastest Streaker Alive"...another questionable topic in Sterno"s Hot Ones.

"THIS CARY BATES IS DANGEROUS!"

I looked up from behind a stack of yellowing four-color pages and smiled. The comic bug had really bitten old college compadre Frank Maynerd in the past few months. Like most of us he had been an ardent reader in his youth. Like many of us he had drifted away from comics for a while...quite a while as a matter of fact. Oh, he was never one to sneer at comics. Indeed, he had always held his memories of the panel story in highest esteem. It had merely taken some outside stimulus to revive his flagging interests. And I, gentle reader, had provided said stimulus. And don't think it was any small effort! Hardly! It had taken the better part of a month of impomptu bull sessions and pitcher parties held in the nether-reaches of Bloomington, Indiana's better watering-holes to persuade him to start picking up comics again. But ultimately he had. And now, a little over two years later, both of us had obtained the fabled sheepskin, and Frank was showing signs of becoming an active fan. So, I was more than just a little proud, and my Rasputin-like tendencies were nicely satisfied.

Be that as it may, the time in question was one of those very muggy weekends so typical of Indiana in early summer. Maynerd was down for a visit...austensibly to do a bit of apartment hunting...and with nothing better to do, we had decided to clear out the usual clutter and sort comics. The outcome was predictable. Late afternoon found us surrounded by a score of aromatic stacks, reliving super-heroic daydreams and listening to solid-gold radio. All of which brings us back to the exclamation Frank uttered at the beginning of this happy flashback...

"THIS CARY BATES IS DANGEROUS!"

"Beg pardon?" I asked, putting a crumbling copy of Whiz to one side.

"I said Cary Bates is dangerous!" Maynern repeated.

"Probably, " I replied. Anyone who would knowingly pervert the minds of America's youth is undoubtedly dangerous. Even more dangerous than funny book freaks! Just ask the good Doctor Werthram, he'll tell you all about it." And with a flourish of my right pinkie-finger, I leaned back against a moldy pile of Archie's Pals 'N Gals and returned to my reading.

"But that's just it!" cried the persistant Maynerd. "Bates has unknowingly opened a whole can of worms that Werthramites could pounce upon like so much live bait!"

That did it! I wasn't about to let such a mishmashed metaphor go unpunished!

"That's ridiculous!" I interjected. "Cary couldn't possibly come up with anything that would do anymore to encourage censorship than has already been done. Besides, I think the correct term is Werthramophiles. Werthramite sounds like some sort of glowing mineral that weakens psychologists."

"But..."

"Or maybe a pint-sized psychologist from another dimension!"

"Will you shut up for a minute and let me explain?"

"Probably not, but if you lean in I'll give you a fighting chance."

"Then look here," said Frank. "This is a copy of Flash #216..."

"Ah, yes! How sad. That was the last 52-page issue...what a noble experiment!"

"Maybe so, but do you remember anything about the story?"

"Ummm, something about Mr. Element having his elemental powers within his body, instead of within his weapons. A bit much, but not as farfetched as some of Cary's ideas."

"Yeah, but look here! In this sequence of page four the Flash ditches his burning uniform in a lake and then runs back home."

"So?"

"So, he's running naked through the middle of Central City!!"

"Well, that may be a bit racy...if you'll pardon the unfortunate choice of words...but note that the caption says that he's running faster than the eye can follow!."

"Still, he's running NAKED through Central City...in 1972!!"

"Again, so?"

"So Cary Bates invented streaking!"

©No, no! Streaking grew out of nude olympics. College fraternities have been doing it for years, ask Uslan sometime. Besides streaking is dead for all intents and purposes."

"That doesn't matter! This pre-

dates streaking by more than two years. Some psych-type is bound to stumble across this sooner or later and ziiiippppp..." Frank made an unwholesome slicing motion across his throat,"..it's Kefauver trial time!"

"I really think you're making a big thing out of this, F.W., old boy."

"Aw, some reactionary type is bound to stir up a fuss! After all, Barry Allen is a policeman. That's bound to ruffle some feathers!"

"Ah, police! Yes. But there's a lot more of the Bohemian in our boy Barry than there is cop!"

"Bohemian? The Flash?"

"But of course! It seems to me, lad,that your knowledge of the mighty Scarlet Speedster is greatly lacking!"

"Yeah...I was more of a Green Lantern man myself. Allen was such a dull guy to me."

"Dull guy?? Dull mind...that's your problem!! Just look at these golden issues!" I cried, picking up a much-cherished box full of Flash. "Look here!! Look at Infantino's Flash -- for Infantino's version is the Flash, no matter how refined Novick or anyone might become -- and you'll see how he's developed. John Broome's stories lay the ground work for the most part, but it's Infantino who breathes the subtle nuances into the figures, puts life into the characters. Consider, if you will, the economic situations of one Barry Allen. He's a police scientist.What does that usually entail?Ballistics, pathology, and the like...forensics, too.Is Barry versed in these things? Obviously,otherwise he wouldn't have been able to hold his job! Yet he displays an uncanny knowledge of hard physics and advanced electronics. Now look at his apartment. Lord, what an apartment! Big! Modernistic! Crammed with books and stereo gear and even a complete lab for chrissakes! Can you afford that on a police salary...even a lab man? Not bloody likely! So what's that mean? Was Barry on the take? Even less likely! Barry has an almost idealistic sense of wrong and right. In fact...yes,very idealistic!Therefore, he must have an extra, outside income. Maybe some form in inheritance. My guess would be that he was getting royalties from some patent. Remember his knack for inventing!"

"Yeah," interjected Maynerd, "but that still doesn't make him a Bohemian!"

"Open your eyes, clown! Look at him! Think of the times! It was the late 50's...the early 60's. Sure, he had short hair! Nearly all men did. But even with short hair he was different. He wore rakish bowties. He always maintained a loose, casual air. Drink in the visual atmosphere of those stories. Barry was cool... very cool...and his world reflected it. He was always taking Iris to some out of the way coffee house or some exotic restaurant. And besides that, he and Iris were always going off on long weekends together...long before they were married! In the early 60's! Talking about being asleep at the code!"

"Well," admitted Maynerd, "you've almost sold me! One more goodie and you'll have me convinced!"

"Ah, I have you! Barry Allen was ...and is...a comic book freak!! A young man with a promising career in an established profession...a civil servant...young..idealistic...a frequenter of coffee houses...and he collects funny books!! Has a cabinet full of 'em! Gets them out and reads them! Loves and cherishes them! In the early 60's, Maynerd!"

"Mighod, you're right!" gasped Maynerd."Barry Allen is a Bohemian!"

"Praise de lawd, he done sees the light!"

"Then Cary Bates isn't to blame! Streaking would be a natural thing for an off-beat character like Barry to do!"

"Of course," I said. "Why do you think they call him the Flash?"

He Always Was a Sucker for Platinum Blondes! .....BY STERNO

Comic book characters come from the strangest places. They're rocketed away from a doomed world...or they're created out of a test tube... or they study like the devil to be great detectives...or they're struck by lightning. Suffice it to say that they're not your average joes. But then you know that already. At least you should know that. If you don't, why are you reading this?

Well, the funny thing is...one of us is now a comic book character. ROG-2000, former CPL galley slave and assistant editor, can now be found in four-color splendor in the back pages of Charlton's E-Man.

"Now wait a minute," you might say. "Waddaya mean, 'one of us'?"

Well...ROG may appear to be lines on paper, but he's really much more.

Along about a year ago, when we were putting the seventh issue of this Comic Person's Legacy together, ROGie first came into being. At That time Roger Slifer and yours truly, Roger Stern, were acting in tandem as executive-associate-assistant-co-editors. It got confusing at times...especially with the two identical first names. Suddenly out of the blue, came a package from Jumpin' John Byrne containing a plethora of eye-catching spot illos. One was particularly eye-catching... it was a magically-metallic, if somewhat knock-kneed, robot.

"That's it!" someone said."That's our co-editor...ROG-2000!"

Well, from there one thing led to another. Robert (call-me-Bob) Layton deftly lettered ROG's name upon the chromium chest. This was almost immediately followed by a fast note to John for some more "ROGie" illos. Mr. Byrne immediatly got turned on.

(It might be well to inject at this point that John Byrne gets turned on to ideas very easily. Make an off-hand remark about your shoes, and he's likely to turn up with a 40-page synopsis for the further adventures of Captain Shoehorn.)

Be that as it may, Byrne Robotics started going all out on ROG. The chest was expanded for a better gear-radio...the waist narrowed for better balance..and the knocking knees became bowlegs. ROGie started popping up everywhere...at the top of the letters page, on the table of contents, on the back cover....

And whenever ROG appeared, we got nice letters. Everybody, it seemed, liked ROG-2000. It was therefore inevitable that ROG should appear in his own strip. We just didn't realize how inevitable.

In the early part of this year Bob talked me into getting together with John in a ROG-2000 strip. (It should be noted that he didn't have to talk very hard.)

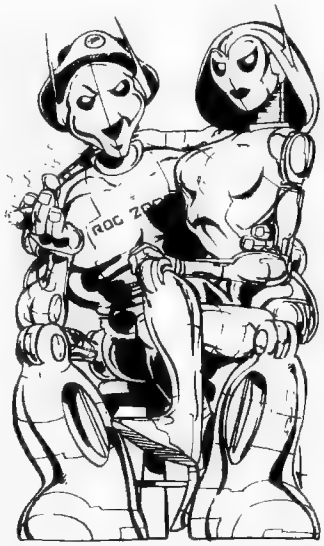
Remember how I said everybody liked ROGie? Enter Nick Cuti!

Nick and George Wildman had, of course, been of incalculable aid in the production of the Charlton Portfolio. And when a rather motley crew of CPL/Gangsters trekked east in July for the New York Comicon, Nick and George met us with open arms. Well, to make a long story a wee bit shorter, Nick saw the semi-completed ROG-strip and flipped! One thing led to another, and suddenly we were losing a son...but gaining a star!

"But what of that first ROG-2000 adventure?" you might ponder.

Ponder no more! We present it here and now as a sort of "untold tale of ROGie". Oddly enough, it leads into the first Charlton ROG-story! And not so oddly, we encourage you to buy each and every copy of E-Man that comes your way!

Gee! Our son,the comic book star!



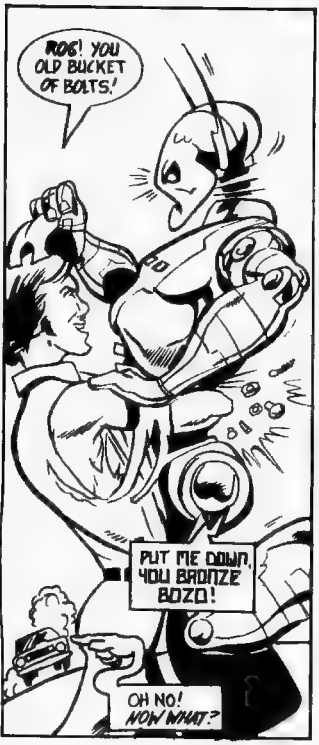
TWILIGHT IN BROOKLYN...
A NIGHT LIKE MOST AT DUFFY'S TAVERN.
BUT THIS NIGHT WILL BE DIFFERENT.
FOR TONIGHT WILL HERALD...
DUFFY'S TAVERN
OOPS! WRONG STRIP!
ROG 2000
THE COMING OF THE

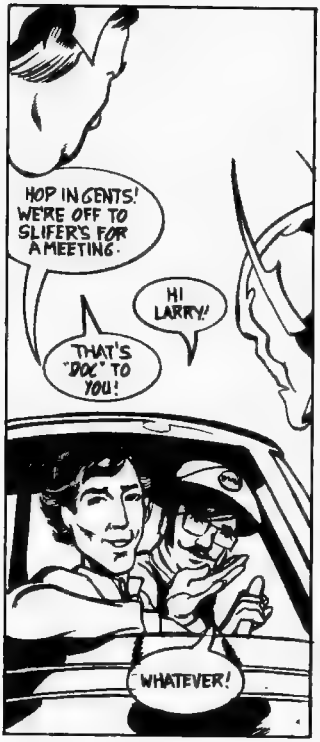
UMMM... HELLO, GANG!
HIYA CLIFF! I'LL HAVE THE USUAL!
ROG 2000
HOLD ON NOW! IS THIS THE CPL STAFF? WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?! LET'S FLASHBACK A FEW HOURS...
...TO A CERTAIN INDY STUDIO!
CPL GANG PUBLICATIONS
KNIGHT AWARD AWARD
OH NO! NOT AGAIN!
HOLD IT DOWN STERNO! THERE'S AN ARTIST AT WORK!
LOOK, YOU METAL MEATBALL ...YOU'LL LEARN TO SPELL OR ELSE--
SESAME STREET
CPL DUE AT PRINTERS YESTERDAY
LAYTON
WORK? YOU HAVEN'T WORKED IN MONTHS, LAYTON!
OH YEAH?
SIGH: THE DAY WAS MERRY FOR BETTER THINGS...
ROG 2000

COMING SOON
BRIGITTE BERM
ALFRED ABEL
AH, YES!
NIGHT ONLY
BETTER THINGS INDEED

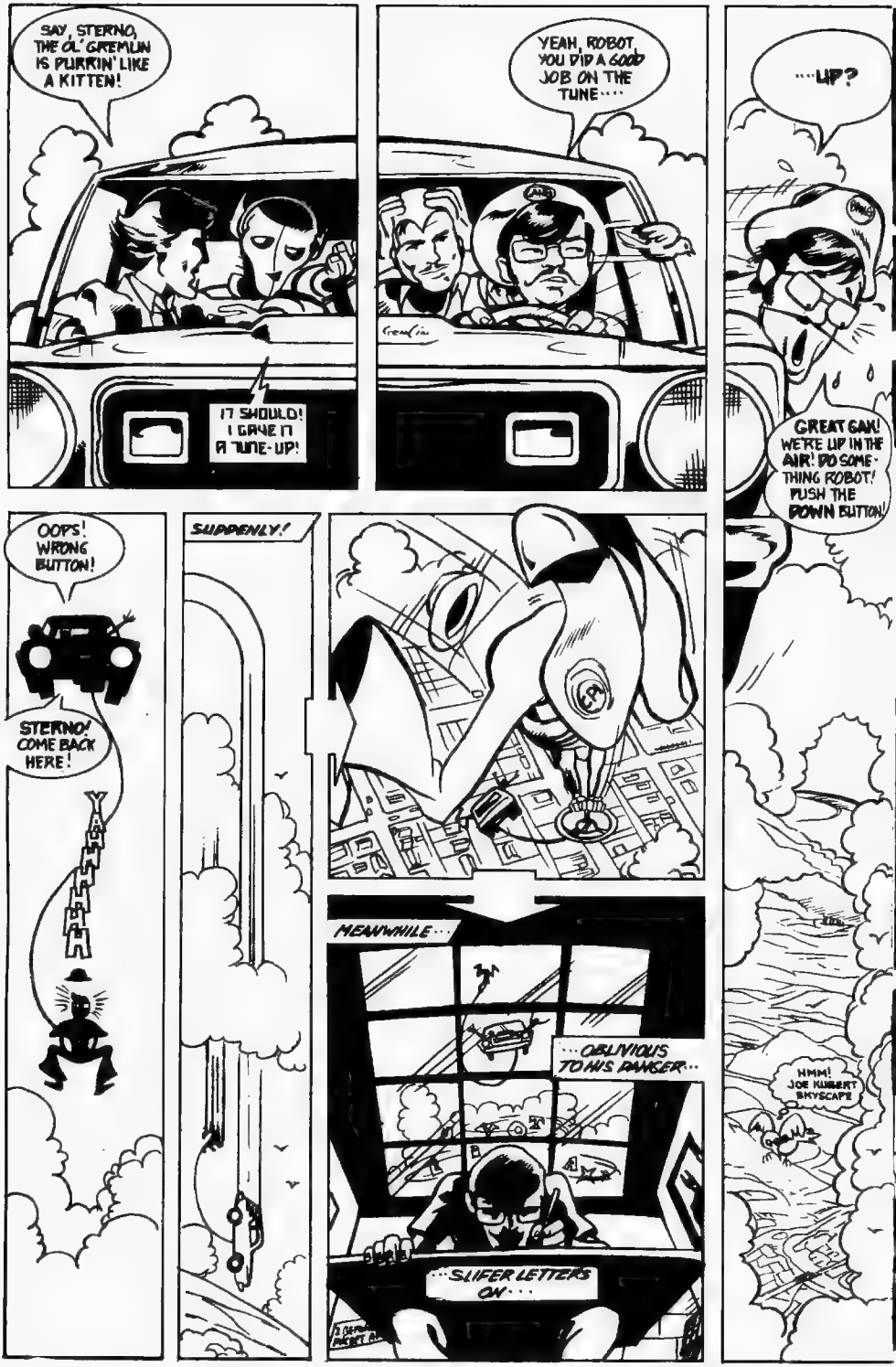
UH OH! LOOKS LIKE ROG'S IDYLLIC AFTERNOON IS ABOUT TO BE INTERRUPTED
ROG

HAVE NO FEAR... DOC LARRY'S HERE!
2000


ROG! YOU OLD BUCKET OF BOLTS!
PUT ME DOWN, YOU BRONZE BOZO!
OH NO! NOW WHAT?


HOP IN GENTS! WE'RE OFF TO SLIFER'S FOR A MEETING.
HI LARRY!
THAT'S "DOC" TO YOU!
WHATEVER!

AND SO--
WHY ARE WE GOING TO SLIFER'S?
WE'VE GOT THREE MORE PAGES TO FILL, THAT'S WHY!
I HAD TO ASK!

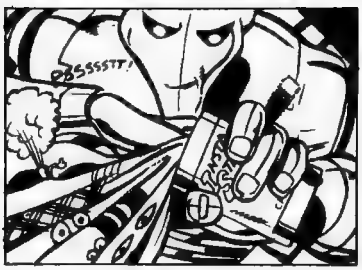

SAY, STERNO, THE OL' GREMLIN IS PURRIN' LIKE A KITTEN!
IT SHOULD! I GAVE IT A TUNE-UP!
YEAH, ROBOT, YOU DID A GOOD JOB ON THE TUNE....
....UP?
GREAT GAK! WE'RE UP IN THE AIR! DO SOMETHING ROBOT! PUSH THE DOWN BUTTON!
OOPS! WRONG BUTTON!
STERNO! COME BACK HERE!
SUDDENLY!
MEANWHILE...
...OBLIVIOUS TO HIS DANGER...
...SLIFER LETTERS ON...
HMM! JOE HUBERT SKYSCAPE

?
LUCKILY WE RAN OUT OF GAS!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
SPLAT
AND SO THE MEETING BEGAN! HOW WOULD THEY FILL THOSE PAGES?
ISOMETRIC EXCERCISES!
A DIORAMA!
EXPANDED LETTER PAGES!
A BUFFERIN AD!
WE NEED DUFFY'S HELP!
RIGHT-O DOC!
GHOD, HE'S TALL!
BUT, HOW DO WE GET TO DUFFY'S IN LESS THAN A PAGE?
YEAH!
BOY, GREAT DIALOGUE I'VE GOT!
... AND WHY DID JOHN MAKE ME LOOK LIKE IRWIN COREY?
GENTLEMEN! GETTING TO DUFFY'S PRESENTS NO PROBLEM! IT WILL TAKE ONLY ONE PANEL USING FLASHBACK TECHNIQUES AND...
ROG-2000
THE PTUI-TUBE!

AND SO THAT'S WHY THEY'RE THERE AND WE'RE HERE! GOT THAT? GOOD! LET'S REJOIN DUFFY AND THE GANG JUST AS WE LEFT THEM...

Dear Reader,
In this space slavish Bob Layton expects your poor, hardworking servant to duplicate the first panel on page two. Those readers who are slickers for detail are invited to buy two copies of C.P.L. for a do-it-yourself paste-up. Me - I've got better things to do ... Jim

SO, WHAT HAPPENS NOW, ROGIE?
OH, I DON'T KNOW. I HAD'T I MIGHT HANG AROUND FOR A WHILE. MAY-BE GET A JOB HACKIN' A CAB OR SUM-SUCH.
30W OIL
ROG-2000
MMRF!
NMPH!
GLP!



Letters from the Readers

Dear Bob & Gang,
Thank you for #8. Just received and enjoyed! Bravo for C.C. Beck's piece...and ditto for Uslan's cry for action!
If you'll give me the various sizes I've got open for cover art, I'll be happy to work one up for you ...if I'm in time for the next issue's cover, that is! Awaiting your note about the above--
Alex Toth

THANKS MUCHLY, MR. T! HOPE YOU ENJOY #11 AS MUCH!

Dear Rog,
Here at long last is the letter you asked for. Like the blob that devoured Mishawaka, it just grew and grew and grew...
I haven't had so much trouble with writing something since doing an essay on Friedrich Neitzche, which held up my graduation for three months. The problem in every case is that I never get anything done unless I get fired up to finish it, and I rarely stayed fired up long enough to finish it. I have hopes (dreams) of someday becoming a published writer - note my modest goals, not wealth, not fame, mere publication-but it will never happen until I knuckle down and finish some stories that I have started. This with this letter. At first I had hoped to mail it in reply by the end of the week that I got issue #8. Then when I finally got a first draft writ, I couldn't force myself to the typewriter and shape up this final. (You're luckier than Marvel, the letters I send them are first draft things of incredible crudeness.)
You asked for comments on issue #8 only, but since you dug around in your catacombs (a robot with catacombs?) and found a copy of number 7, I can't help but direct a few comments towards that issue too.
The high point of the issue was the Craig Russell interview. It was a good interview-lengthy-informative and avoided the domination of traditional questions. I hope that Craig continues to work in comics as he has a lot of talent and enthusiasm. And of the two, I think enthusiasm is the more important.
The second highlight of the seventh issue was the letter by Warren Prindle. I haven't read quite as bizarre and interesting a letter since Richard Shaver wrote to Ted White's Amazing SF, still talking about Teros and Deros and other Shaver Mysteries. It's hard to believe that these people are for real. Of course, if it weren't for Prindle's letter I would never have known that CPL was so Marvel-oriented. It seems that most of the fanzines I have found have been DC-philes. And DC has been a company that I find much lacking in(and lately also Marvel. *sob* maybe I'm growing up.) Actually, you seem Charlton-oriented as much as anything-oriented, which is nice as Charlton is the one company that is honestly trying to upgrade its line.
Which brings us to issue #8. The strange thing about CPL is that for such a small 'zine, at least in comparison to monsters like Chronicle, Phase, Graphic Story World, etc.) there is so much to it. Turn a page and there's a sercon article on the nature of comics. Turn another page and there's a bit of fannish horseplay; another page and you find a well executed vignette about the Punisher. It's an amazing fanzine with nothing insignificant about it.
There is no question that Mike Uslan is concerned about the state of comics these days, and I don't blame him. There does seem to be an inverse relationship between the number of comics and the quality of said comics. What we can do to better comics is:1) complain coherently, intelligently and often, and ?) as Mike suggests, stop buying it! Certainly, as a comics junkie myself, I can see the importance of overcoming compulsive buying. But only for the sense of freedom and power, it returns to you.
Loquaciously,
Brian Earl Brown
Mishawaka, Indiana

WELL! THE ONLY THING THAT COULD BE NICER THAN AN LOC FROM THE PROLIFIC MR. BROWN WOULD BE AN ARTICLE FROM THE SAME. (CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT HE COULD DO IF HE EVER GETS "FIRED UP"?) THANKS FOR THE KIND WORDS, BRIAN.
AND NOW, FOR A MORE ABSURD POINT OF VIEW WE TRAVEL SOUTH FROM MISHAWAKA TO THE HILLS OF MONROE COUNTY AND THE EVER-CAPTIVATING CLARENCE RUTHERFORD!

Dear Gang and Frank Maynerd:
Just an observation as to your recent pin-up of the Thing naked: Either Alicia is having the time of her life

OR

She soon will be not only blind, but crippled!

Clarence Rutherford
East Pischkyville, Ind.

MR. MAYNERD REPLIES: "A DEVOTED STUDENT OF THE TANTRIC, MS. MASTERS ONLY ENGAGES IN POSITIONS APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY."

Dear Bob, Sterno and Rogie,

CPL #8 was, as usual, full of good art and (largely) perceptive commentary. Of the latter, Paty's article on women in comics was especially good. The whole thing hinged on the psychology of sex role identity, a topic which Paty seemingly knows quite well. At any rate, her suggestions for more women in the business of writing, drawing and inking is well taken. In fact, it is such a good idea, that it is surprising that it hasn't already been implemented. The suggestion of female co-authors and/or conselors is especially well-thought out, since it shouldn't codt much to set it up. (Ah, the factor: cost)

Glad to hear that John & Duffy hit the big time, though I hope this doesn't mean the end of their fine illos for CPL.

Keep Pluggin' The Medium Needs Ya,
Ed O'Reilly
Oxford,Ohio 45056

NO WAY, ED! NOT AS LONG AS THE DUFF'S PARENTS STILL LIVE WITHIN OUR GRASP!! AND AS FOR JOHN...WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THAT THE DEW-LINE HAS USES OTHER THAN AS AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM! (OH, REALLY?NO...O'REILLY!) SERIOUSLY, THOUGH, PATY'S ARTICLE GARNERED A GREAT DEAL OF MAIL...SECOND ONLY TO MIKE USLAN'S CRISIS-CALL IN THE NUMBER OF STIMULATED RESPONSES. RIGHT, KIM EASTLAND?

Dear Gang,

What a letdown issue #8 was! I noticed the fine art and articles that CPL is known for, then I realized the absence of that outstanding column that the magazine usually runs: Revival/Survival. However, I have it from good sources that Slifer went pro. Therefore, I leafed through the latest comics and found Slifer's credits as letterer of Amazing Adventures #28. I always thought that Slifer was wasting his time working for CPL.

Goodly Bump,
Roger Slifer
Queens, New York

WE USUALLY WOULDN'T HAVE A REPLY FOR A LETTER LIKE THIS...BUT SINCE THE SPACE IS OPEN, WE THOUGHT WE'D MENTION THAT OUR ONE-TIME CO-EDITOR, BESIDES PUTTING WORDS IN THE BALLOONS FOR UNCA STAN, HAS ALSO TAKEN UP SKY-DIVING! HIT THE SILK,SLIFER!

Dear Gang,

Thanks much for the Charlton Portfolio. A beautiful zine artwise and fun to read. Ditko's Blue Beetle story is a must for everyone, since it was never published in the professional comics. Do you plan to have another issue of this zine someday?

Don Rosa's Checklist is a real plus for your zine, but he did not list Thunderbolt #1 Jan. 1966. This issue had his origin story, then came #51 April, 1966. Thanks again.

Best,
Richard L. Durell
El Segundo, Cal.

IF YOU READ STERNO'S MONSTEROUS EDITORIAL, YOU HAVE BECOME AWARE OF OUR FUTURE PLANS INVOLVING THE CHARLTON BULLSEYE, OUR NEW BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION PREMIERING LATE IN JANUARY. SPOTLIGHTING THE FIRST ISSUE WILL BE THE UNPUBLISHED CAPTAIN ATOM #90. (PLUG) ANOTHER MINOR MIRACLE OF FANDOM BY CPL/GANG PUBLICATIONS. ACTUALLY, WE HAD INTENDED TO LIST THUNDERBOLT #1 IN THE CHECKLIST, BUT RAN OUT OF SPACE ON THAT PAGE. LOOK FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE LIST IN THE AFORE MENTIONED BULLSEYE.
.....SUBSCRIBE NOW!!!!!

"DOES THE VISION HAVE BLOOD?"

BY PATY

I've been accused of limiting my outlook and/or artistic growth because of my obsession with a particular character. Yaggghhhh! Does a doctor limit his outlook or ability when HE specializes? Does it necessarily follow that because one does nothing but brain surgery that he knows no other medical procedures? I am a specialist! I can do other things...I PREFER not to. My speciality? The VISION!! I think I can safely say I know more about what makes Vis tick than even Roy Thomas (and he created Vis)! Okay...so in the next few paragraphs I am going to dissect him for all and sundry.

If you don't like androids, can't stand psychological breakdowns, or generally abhor the Vision, you'd best move on to another article!

First, let's examine what we know about Vis' physical make-up. Everybody knows he's an android...a mechanized being with humanoid form. His body and internal organs are composed of a material which we can only assume to be plastoid in nature ...but which must of necessity be unstable enough to allow its continual molecular disruption, yet stable enough to maintain its own qualities. I cannot buy the idea that any other material was used. It would make the transference of molecules too difficult. Now here's a point which no one seems to have considered. If the Vision has **that** kind of power over every cell of his body--a prerequisite to a power such as his--why can't he change his looks, color, etcetera? Why could he not become another Questor, for example? The answer, of course is that physically he CAN! The catch is that psychologically he can do nothing to alter his basic condition at all.He has been programmed so he can use his power only to affect his mass and density. So he is...more or less....stuck with a physical make-up guaranteed to make him stand out in a crowd! That scarlet, seamless, flawless skin...no body hair, eyelashes, brows, or...well....and eyes out of a lens-makers dream! Well! Believe it or not, boys... THAT'S SEXY!!!

But does he have blood? Wellllll ...not like a human's! But every machine (that's what he is, you know!) needs a cooling/heating and/or lubrication system. So, when he's "wounded", he will "bleed"! (Attention all Blood Banks...transfusions are possible only with properly matched fluid! And just TRY typing the stuff!)

I do maintain that the Vision's body is programmed to repair itself ...excepting major organ failures, of course...given the proper amount of time, energy, and inactivity. In fact, the only thing that didn't ring true in the "Living Bombs" story was that there was no blood about...not even from the humans who blew themselves up! The comics code aside, when some idiot blows himself oe someone else up...IT'S MESSY!

Ah, but I digress. Nervous system! As Mr. Pym found out, the Vis' nervous system is highly more efficent than the ol' human synaptic system. And also more refined, I would suspect. Vis can probably control the amount of impulses his computer brain receives. Therefore, he can...if he wishes...reduce the amount of pain he feels...or heighten the amount of data-imput, giving him better sight, audio-reception, and tactile stimulation. All things of course, have their limitations. If Vis is pouring his concentration and energies into repairing a portion of his body, he will obviously not be able to channel his energies into controlling the pain he feels, and OUCH!

One thing Pym thought he had worked out which didn't sound kosher is the fluidstuff for making Vis intangible. That stuff has nothing to do with Vis! It's for projecting onto other things to make THEM intangible! HOW ELSE COULD THE VISION HAVE CARRIED WANDA(see Avengers#116) AND RESCUED HER FROM "FALLING TO HER DEATH" IN A POOL OF RED-HOT LAVA???? Vis obviously cannot carry things of normal density when he is intangible (a fact Steve Englehart remembered in issue 121). So, the action in issue 116 is explainable only if the Vision has the power to make other objects as intangible as himself! I surmise that Vis is not really cognizant of this power...the occurance in issue 116 was a reflex action born of something akin to panic! He should, however, reflect upon this action...explore its possibilities ...and eventually realize and develop this potential. Any other

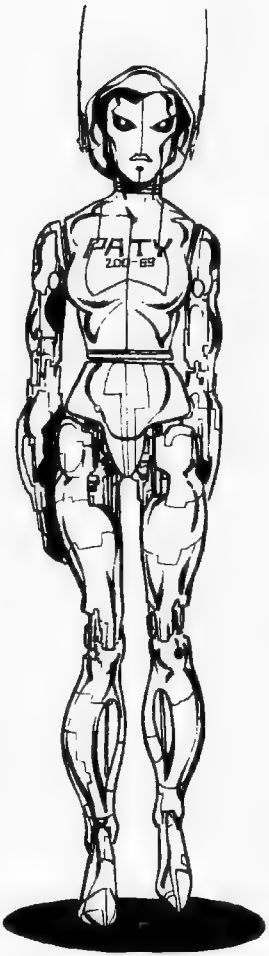
course is not logical.

Speaking of which...psychologically, the Vision is a MESS!! His programmed human brain patterns tell him he's human. But he obviously ISN'T! Conflicting data like that could foul up any logical computer! And that's just what it's doing! Ever since Vis started considering himself more human than machine(Wanda's doing), he's been fouling up... a mere shadow of his former cool and competent self! His reaction time is slowed. His abilities are wavery. His concentration is shot to hell. And virtually all Vis' abilities rely on his concentration ability! Not hard for a machine...almost impossible for a "human" in love! In other words, Wanda's love is gonna kill him! It's already made him too vulnerable! And with the Mantis mess...well!

What if we ignore Mantis and take Wanda out of the picture? Vis' is still a mess! His android body needs no sleep, but his human subconscious needs...or at least thinks it needs...rest. So the Vision sits in the dark and tries to mollify the subconscious cravings of his mind. His human brain patterns say, "I'm human...I have a family!" He isn't and doesn't, but that doesn't negate primal feelings and the need for a family that his mind says he has. But he's an android...does a machine have a soul? This is the stuff of which nightmares are made. And who wants to sleep if you're gonna have nightmares? And if you don't or can't sleep? Wow! Under these circumstances (not to mention the subconscious guilt he harbors over his "profane love" for a human) it's no wonder he's slightly suicidal...and he IS, you know! The only person I can see him confiding (man-to-man) in is Jarvis, a man whose insight into Vis' problems is keener than any of the other Avengers. And I will give you odds that sooner or later Vis is gonna come to the conclusion that everybody will be better off with him gone...soooo.....

And still, there is one area of the Vision's psychological make-up or programming that has never really been explored...his previously programmed instructions from ULTRON! Roy Thomas showed us briefly (in Avengers 66 & 67) what might happen when one of those "prime directives" took over. The upshot of the whole schmear is that when a preprogrammed command takes over, the Vision is helpless until he has carried out the command. Either RT didn't know what he had...or he did know and was afraid of what he'd done! Whatever the case, this most fascinating aspect of the Vision has never again been used...but its possibilities are astronomical! The Avengers would soon find out that the Vision might turn on them, humanity, or even himself at any given moment... and STILL be blameless of any harm he might do!

There's only one thing about Vis that I'm not sure about. And I intend to find that out just as soon as I can lure him into my boudoir ..... "Does the Vision have ....toes?".



DON'T SHOW AND TELL EVERYTHING

BY C.C. BECK

Everyone is familiar with the person who, when telling a joke or relating an incident, goes into such great detail that his listeners wonder if he will ever get to the point. As comic strips are stories in picture form, the men who make them often do the same thing. Some comic strips have been running for years and never yet have said anything worthwhile. They are like soap operas in which the actors playing the parts grow old and die and are replaced without the listeners even noticing any difference.

Other comic strips, some of them of great age, present complete stories each with a beginning, a middle, and an ending. These stories may last for only a few panels,as in the daily joke strips, or they may run for a number of weeks. In comic books, which have a limited number of pages, the stories have to come to an end before the writers and artists run out of space, but even here some are so jammed with details not important to the story that they resemble the long-winded, rambling, pointless stories told by some bore at a party.

Many people love "soap opera" stories because they seem so true to life. Most people's lives are pointless, go nowhere, and end without even causing a ripple. Most people, themselves, are full of warts,wrinkles, aches and pains, vague feelings of one kind or another, and quite without any features by which to distinguish them from their fellow-creatures.These people either admire or hate anyone who is outstanding in any way, either physically as by being taller or shorter than the average person, or more athletic, or having a larger mustache;or mentally as by being either a genius or an idiot.

To produce a good comic character calls for both a genius and an idiot--a genius to think up the idea in the first place and then an idiot to put it down on paper for weeks, months and years.As among the normal population both geniuses and idiots are quite rare---about as rare as giants and midgets---very few good comic strips exist. All the others are produced by normal, average, undistinguished people and are long-winded, boring, crammed with unim-

portant details, and never come to any conclusions at all.

The largest thing you can think of, say an entire universe, can be shown in a single picture with two words of copy: THE UNIVERSE. Of course there won't be much detail shown and the copy leaves almost everything to the reader's imagination. To go into detail you would have to show a picture of an atomic particle, then repeat this picture again and again until you had shown it as many times as there are atomic particles in existence. This would get pretty boring after a while, yet it is just what the party bore or long-winded banquet speaker tries to do.

To draw an animal you don't draw, one by one, all the hairs covering it in hopes of getting a picture. You don't draw faces by putting down all the wrinkles, pimples and warts present. You don't show a crowd by drawing a thousand individuals one by one, You don't tell a comic story by minutely detailing every tiny bit of action, every wrinkle in every garment, every hair in every beard, then adding so many thousands of words of copy that the reader never looks at the pictures anyway.

You must abstract,that is select, what is important, forret about everything else, and show just a few details that will suggest all the others. A brick wall is composed of thousands of individual bricks, yet when you show a wall you can indicate that it is a brick wall rather than a board wall or a stone wall by showing just a few bricks here and there, not all of them.

Many writers and artists are so proud of their ability to write and draw everything and anything in existance that they can't keep from "showing off" constantly. They put in little asides and little displays of technique which are as distracting to the reader as would be a fly on the end of the heroine's nose, or a hole in the hero's shoe. If the story calls for a fly or a hole,draw one or the other, otherwise don't!

The average person is not aware that all words and pictures are abstract. They have no meaning at all to a dog or a cat, only to people. Words have no meaning to people who can't read and pictures have meaning only to those who understand the conventions and artificial devices employed in making pictures. Comic books are so full of artificial devices---panel outlines, captions, speech balloons, sound effects and so on---that to many people they are quite meaningless. Children seem to love them, but then, children are pretty smart. After all, children born in China learn to speak and read Chinese, don't they? How many adults do you know who can speak Chinese, unless of course they were educated in China?

Even the Chinese know that "one picture is worth a thousand words." And one good picture must be worth a thousand bad ones. So let's have fewer words and better pictures in comics. It's really not so hard to produce a good comic---if you're a genius or an idiot. People who aren't ought to go into some other line of work.

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